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# THE USE OF RELEVANT FACTORS FOR CONSUMERS IN DESIGNING A COMMUNICATIONAL MESSAGE

Literature  
review

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## Keywords

Consumer behavior  
Communicational message  
Purchase decision

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## JEL Classification

M30, M31, Q37

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## Abstract

*Today, organizations must adapt to the new realities of the environment in which they operate, and their efforts must be increasingly more oriented towards identifying the factors that influence consumer behavior, in particular economic, social and psychological aspects. When consumers are acting on incomplete information base, they assume automatically a risk for each purchasing decision. The size of the risk decreases depending on the quantity and relevance of information transmitted through communicational messages. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to highlight the factors that should be taken into account when designing a communicational message, so that this has to have the ability to change consumer attitudes and to keep constant interest to the products and / or services of a company.*

## 1. Introduction

Today, consumers turn to many sources of information, and the value of the communicational messages has increased considerably. Highly targeted, the integrated marketing communication campaigns are based on the strengths of the existing communication tools, to favorably influence the behavior of the target audience. Designing an effective message and selecting the most appropriate communication tools are important steps in the creation and maintenance of preferences the consumer has for a product / one brand or company. To be successful today, a company must maintain permanent contact with reality; and the only reality that matters is already in the minds of potential consumers. The main goal of the positioning is not to create a new and different product, but rather the handling of what already exists in the mind of the consumer. Today, at the level of the outlets markets, the strategies of the past no longer work. There are too many products, too many companies and too much marketing activities. The question which is most often on the lips of the skeptics who do not believe in positioning is "Why". Why is there the need of a new approach in advertising and marketing? The answer to this question is that we have become a society that communicates excessively. In such a society, to talk about "the impact" of the advertising messages means to overestimate an eventual effectiveness of the message transmitted. In the "jungle" of the communication, the only hope to the companies is to be more selective, focusing on target groups restricted, in other words, to adopt the segmentation. Advertising is only the tip of the iceberg communication. The transmitted message is not represented by the means of communication, but it is certainly affected by it. The means of communication are not a simple system of data transmission, but rather acts as a filter. Only a very small portion of the original material reaches the mind of the receiver. The best approach in our society with problems of communication in excess is the message simplified to the maximum. In communication, as well as in the architecture, less means more. Companies must have an incisive message, able to make its way into the consumer's mind.

### Literature review

Knowing the way in which customers have access to communications transmitted on the market may reveal their preferences for the ways in which they want to receive the information. Taking into account the consumer expectations, an organization can use a communicational message in a way more effective and more economical. Schultz and Kitchen (2000) suggest the fact that an additional way to improve the communication strategy is to think the message content by the

customer: When is it the most likely for the message to be relevant? When is the most likely for the target audience to be receptive to it? Understanding the trends and the seasonal cycles of purchasing or the modalities of usage a product / service can help organizations in their efforts to maximize your relevance of the messages transmitted. Taking into account customer preferences - through their contact with the product/brand - can be determined the point at which the client may be much more receptive to a message (Schultz and Kitchen, 2000).

Following the studies conducted on the specialized literature other stimuli that may constitute key factors in the design of a communicational message were also identifies, and they can influence thus, the decision of choice and purchasing a product by the consumers. In a highly competitive market in which consumers have a wide range of products from which they can choose, companies should use a variety of means to communicate the relative benefits of products in order to reach consumers and to generate sales. In this sense, matters affecting the marketing mix, respectively, product, price, placement and promotion can be considered.

From the perspective of the product, the main stimuli that may be key factors in the design of a communicational message and which can influence, thus, the decision of choice and purchasing a product by the consumers will be presented further. In any context of the buying process we should take into account those elements of the product and/or service so as to make him prominently. Two of the most important elements are the product itself and mark (Bearden and Etzel, M., 1982). The brand is a critical component regarding the consumer perception on quality of the product (Grewal et al., 1998).

For a better positioning it is necessary to identify the characteristics of the product what follows to be highlighted in the marketing mix and, in particular, in the communication campaigns. The packaging becomes an increasingly important factor whereby the product can be differentiated and can develop an identity (Brooksbank, 1994). The packaging and its design play a key role in communicating the benefits of the product to customers (Dobson & Yadav, 2012). In the minds of the consumers, the product and packaging are intrinsically linked to the extent that they can become synonymous one with another. A buyer considers that any of them would contain a package - words, graphs, ingredients, size, etc. - it is exactly what becomes its content, whether it's a perfume bottle or a glass with milk.

Today, it is difficult for the communicational messages to lead to an effective behavior (purchase) of the consumers. Therefore, the packaging has become for companies, an

effective medium to communicate, differentiate and influence the decision of purchasing of consumers in a extremely competitive market. One of the most difficult tasks for an organization is to know and better understand the needs of the target audience so that they are to be reflected in the quality of the product and in communicational messages transmitted (Dobson & Yadav, 2012). The design of the packaging of a product represents an essential tool in the modern marketing activities undertaken for the consumer goods (Rundh, B., 2009). To be successful on the market this should reflect the consumer preferences (Creusen, M., Veryzer, R., Schoormans, J., 2010).

The packaging provides an attractive method to transmit communication messages and information to consumers about the product attributes (Silayoi & Speece, 2004). Packaging plays an important role in the consumer purchasing decision. How the consumer perceives the subjective entity of a product, through the elements of communication transmitted through the packaging, they influence the choice decision of this, the packaging being thus a key factor in developing a marketing strategy and successful communication (Silayoi et al., 2003).

The uniqueness of the product is defined as the degree to which the product is designed and developed to meet unique needs or to be used in unique scopes (Cavusgil et al., 1993). The unique products are usually highly innovative and have the ability to meet customer needs at a much higher level than competing products (Cooper & Kleinschmidt, 1995). Using this competitive advantage, organizations can increase the perceived value of the products and services by the current and potential customers (Pomona, 2011).

In the specialized literature a series of stimuli are presented that may influence the decision of choice and purchase of a product by the consumer and that can be key factors in the design of a communicational message.

**A. Previous experience with a product/service, brand, company.** When customers are familiar with the product, and this satisfies the consumer needs, choosing and buying the product will be with much faster.

**B. Consumer interests** - usually, the variety of topics that the people are interested differs from one person to another.

**C. Risk-taking** - the types of risks the consumer is exposed to are: financial risk, social risk and psychological risk.

**D. The conditions of purchase** - may have implications in terms of the consumer buying decision depending on certain conjunctural factors.

**E. Social visibility.** Products indicate in many cases the social status of its owner.

As the market is saturated by products and/or services, most companies try to differentiate

through transmitting the functional attributes of their using communicational messages. However, these features have become easily copied by competitors. Therefore, the challenge to differentiate comes back to the specialists in marketing and communication, which must transmit the values of emotional and/or rational that can influence consumer buying behavior. In this respect, an important aspect is to identify those external stimuli that may be key factors in the design of a communicational message that can influence communication, and that can influence, thus, the decision of choice and purchasing a product by the consumer (Niazi et al., 2012).

## Conclusions

Improving the demarches of communicational nature can be achieved by changing the way of thinking of organizations involving increasingly more the final consumer in the communication process.

A product or a brand exist in the consumer's mind not only because he/she had an experience with it, but also due to the medium and long term effects that a message built on the base of wishes, expectations or consumer preferences transmitted simultaneously through as many tools of communication as possible, has. Building and managing relationships with consumers can have a direct and positive effect on the efficiency of the results of communication of a company.

There are a number of stimuli that can constitute key factors in the design of a communicational message and that can influence thus the decision of the choice and purchase a product by the consumers in the specialized literature.

Creative communicational messages can assist organizations in their efforts to ensure the sustainability of the image of a product/brand or even the company itself. Today, organizations must adapt to the new realities of the environment in which they operate and they use the communicational messages as a means through which they can develop lasting relationships with both customers and stakeholders.

## Acknowledgement:

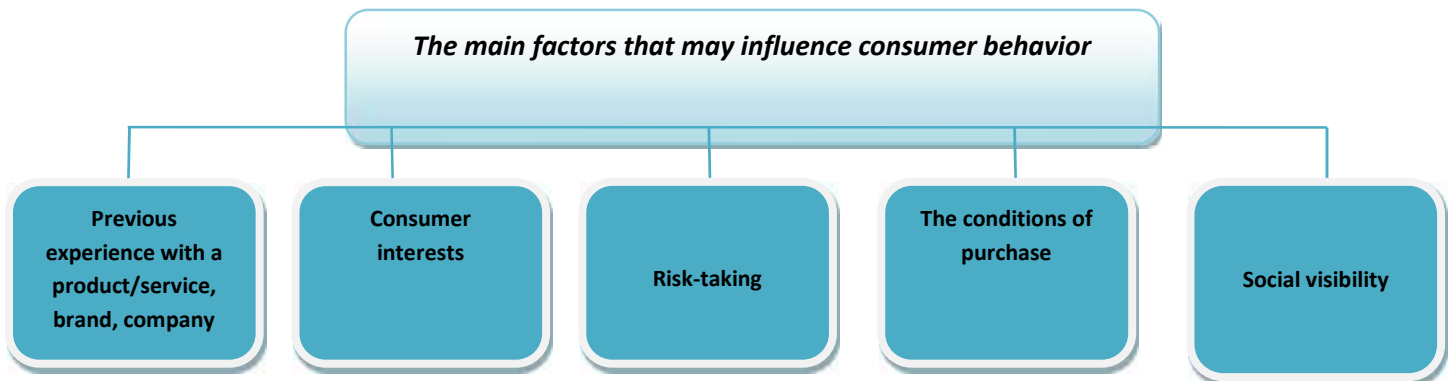
This work was cofinanced from the European Social Fund through Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development 2013-2020, project number POSDRU 159/1.5/S/142115 "Performance and excellence in doctoral and postdoctoral research in Romanian economics science domain".

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**Figure 1. Factors that may influence consumer behavior**



*Source: Adaptation from Haghshenas, L., Abedi, A., Ghorbani, E., Kamali, A., Harooni, M., „Review consumer behavior and factors affecting on purchasing decisions”, Singaporean Journal Of Business Economics, And Management Studies Vol.1, no.10, 2013.*

